

BYRON L. DORGAN
NORTH DAKOTA
322 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3405
202-224-2551
202-224-9378 TDD

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THIRD AND ROSSER AVENUE
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The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

I want to bring to your attention a serious animal welfare issue that is occurring on a ranch in my home state of North Dakota and neighboring land in South Dakota.

I have heard reports this week of a huge bison ranch in Sioux County North Dakota where thousands of bison are underfed and malnourished. Hundreds of bison have broken through their fences and show signs of illness and starvation. In addition to the health and welfare of these animals, this situation is putting a burden on the neighboring farmers and community members who are kind enough to clean up after the negligence of others.

I understand that State and local authorities have already taken some remedial action. I ask that you direct the appropriate officials at USDA to look into the matter and determine whether any federal laws or statutes have been violated. This ranch is owned by a Maurice Wilder of Clearwater Florida and sits on a stretch of land adjacent to Highway 6 between Selfridge ND and McLaughlin SD. I have attached a copy of a newspaper report for your reference.

I appreciate your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Byron L. Dorgan
United States Senator